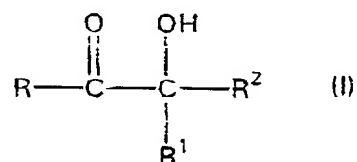


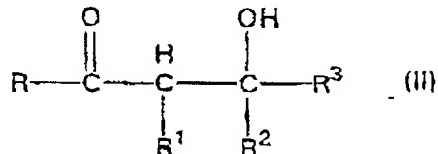
I claim

1. A process of tanning hide characterized in that it comprises a step of contacting the hide with a member selected from the group consisting of:
an α -hydroxy ketone of General Formula (I).



wherein R^1 is a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group and R^1 and R^2 independently are hydrogen, a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group, and R^1 and R^2 are not concomitantly H,

and a β -hydroxy ketone of General Formula II:



wherein R is a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group and R^1 and R^2 and R^3 independently are hydrogen, a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group.

2. A process according to claim 1, characterized in that it comprises a step of contacting said hide with the β -hydroxy ketone of formula (II).

3. A process according to claim 1, characterized in that it comprises a step of contacting said hide with the α -hydroxy ketone of formula (I) wherein $\text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$, or CH_3 , and wherein when $\text{R}^2 = \text{H}$, R^1 is alkyl.

4. A process according to claim 2, characterized in that it comprises the step of contacting said hide with the β -hydroxy ketone of general formula (II), wherein R is CH_3 , R^1 is H or CH_3 , R^2 is CH_3 , and R^3 is H or CH_3 .

5. A process according to claim 1, wherein said β -hydroxy ketone is diacetone alcohol.

6. A process according to claim 1, wherein the amount of said α - or β -hydroxy ketone ranges from about 0.1% to 100% by weight based on the total weight of said hide.

7. A process according to claim 1, wherein said α - or β -hydroxy ketone is used (a) as such, (b) diluted in water, or (c) in mixtures with other organic compounds acting as diluents, with or without water.

8. A process according to claim 1, wherein the concentration of said α - or β -hydroxy ketone ranges from about 0.1% to about 30% in weight based on the total weight of hide, and wherein said step of contacting the hide with said α - or β -hydroxy ketone precedes a step of contacting the hide with a chrome salt or tannin.

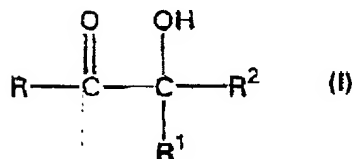
9. The process of claim 8, wherein said concentration of α - or β -hydroxy ketone ranges from about 0.5% to about 10% in weight based on the total weight of hide.

10. The process of claim 8, wherein said concentration of α - or β -hydroxy ketone ranges from about 1% to about 5% in weight based on the total weight of hide.

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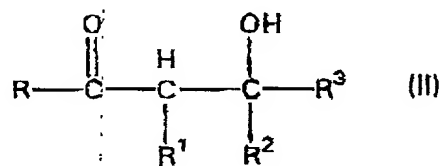
11. A process of tanning hide, characterized in that it comprises some or all of the following steps:

- (a) deliming;
- (b) bating;
- (c) pickling;
- (d) conditioning with an α -hydroxy ketone of General Formula (I):



wherein R^1 is a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group and R^1 and R^2 independently are hydrogen, a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group, and R^1 and R^2 are not concomitantly H,

or with a β -hydroxy ketone of General Formula II:



wherein R is a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group and R^1 and R^2 and R^3 independently are hydrogen, a linear or ramified alkyl group or an aromatic group; and

- (e) chromium or tannin tanning.

12. A hide tanned by the process of claim 1.